

INTERVIEW WITH KAMİLE (ÇAMİLE) TÜRBEDAR

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Duration: 50 minutes

Present:

1. Kamile Türbedar (Speaker)
2. Ebru Süleyman (Interviewer)
3. Donjeta Berisha (Camera)

Transcription notation symbols of non-verbal communication:

() – emotional communication

{ } – the speaker explains something using gestures.

Other transcription conventions:

[] – addition to the text to facilitate comprehension

Footnotes are editorial additions to provide information on localities, names or expressions.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you tell me your name and surname?

Kamile Türbedar: Kamile Türbedar, my husband's surname is Viçitirlni. Me... my father died in the war in '41. I was born after my father [died]. I have four brothers and I am the only girl. My father died in war. We used to live in Mitrovica, they [partisans] fought against the Germans then my father died in war. The state looked after us greatly.

Ebru Süleyman: When were you born?

Kamile Türbedar: I was born in '41. I do not know my father, do not remember him but my mother raised us. The five of us grew up as orphans. They [the state] looked after us substantially. Back then my mother would collect two pensions; one for my father because he died in war, she got my father's pension. Do you know they used to give child support? Thus we lived well.

Ebru Süleyman: You went to Mitrovica during the war when your father died.

Kamile Türbedar: No, I lived in Mitrovica with my father, [no] my mother lived. And later we went to live to the Tomb, after the Tomb we came to Pristina. I am *Türbedar*,¹ if you know Sultan Murat's Tomb, there.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you tell me a little bit more, why are you a tomb keeper family?

Kamile Türbedar: There was the Türbedar family... I had three paternal uncles. They were three brothers and two sisters. Thus they died.

Ebru Süleyman: They were looking after the Tomb.

Kamile Türbedar: They were looking after the tomb; my grandmother, my grandfather used to look after it, tomb keepers. Now my cousin's wife is looking after, a Bosnian [woman] is looking after the tomb, thus my grandmother always took care of the tomb.

¹ Turkish: *Türbedar*, literally means tomb keeper. The speaker's family took care of the Sultan Murad's tomb in Gazimestan, therefore, they adopted Türbedar as a surname.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you remember your grandmother, grandfather?

Kamile Türbedar: All of it, not my grandfather but my grandmother. I do not know my grandfather but I know my grandmother. I know my grandmother; I cannot remember my father as well because I was born after the war. They [partizans] took my father [to fight] against Germans then he died in battle, I was born after that. Besides first they named me Şirin, then for the purpose of repeating my father's name, they found out three weeks later that he was dead, they changed it from Çamil to Çamile and then I stayed Kamile (laughs). There you go.

Ebru Süleyman: It means that you were born after first... Second World War, it was difficult back then.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes life [was hard], but they looked after us. The state took care of us. They would invite us to the municipality for lunch, *Sedmi Juli* [July seventh]² it was called. Then we would leave the place, but [first] they would prepare us lunch, give my mother flowers, they looked after us. My mother used to collect two pensions. One for my father because he died in war, [she] raised us. Just because we did not study, one of my brothers graduated from the gymnasium, became a cinema operator, the other one became a driver, so it goes for the other one, he does this... craft. Thus I went and did craft work, became a hairdresser. I am the first hairdresser in Pristina.

Ebru Süleyman: Do you remember?

Kamile Türbedar: I remember, when I started there was *zadruga*,³ we did not have a mentor, he went to Turkey. The two of us, Leyla, Sami Dula's wife and I, two hairdressers, students, it was just two years since we were learning. Then we became the experts. Thus me and her became experts and then they brought a hairdresser from Belgrade, because there were no hairdressers in Pristina. Maybe not even in Kosovo. There were not. They did not do it, they only did the hair of very important people, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you remember sister Kamile, how the city was when you were kids, what did you use to do when you were a kid?

Kamile Türbedar: When we were kids...

Ebru Süleyman: Neighborhood, neighbors.

Kamile Türbedar: Neighborhoods, we used to stay up until *sahur*⁴ in Ramadan. Then they would play the drums, everyone rushed home to eat *sahur* because we were going to fast. Ramadan was like this,

² July 7 was the Day of the Uprising of the People of Serbia in the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Serbia. It was a national holiday that was celebrated from 1945 to 2001.

³Serb. *Zadruga*, literally means the store, co-op, but the speaker uses the term to refer to the Hairdresser's Association.

⁴ Meal eaten before the start of fasting during Ramadan.

we used to prepare *iftars*.⁵ They used to cook *mazdore*,⁶ invite each other to *iftar*, now these *iftars* do not exist, the world changed, it's different.

Ebru Süleyman: Back then the rivers were open right?

Kamile Türbedar: Rivers, yes. Priştëvka used to flow in front of the theater, just like that.

Ebru Süleyman: Then the city started to change.

Kamile Türbedar: To change, of course it did change. A lot changed in Pristina. It was different. Back then it was in a certain way, now it is in another. It is fixed, downtown has been fixed. Then it was just Union, Grand [Hotel]. Grand was constructed later. This, this hotel next to the theater, was it called Beogradska?

Ebru Süleyman: Perhaps Božur?

Kamile Türbedar: Božur. Božur. Božur was the oldest one. We used to celebrate New Years there. New Years, yes.

Ebru Süleyman: And so... who lived in Pristina, what languages did you use to hear on the street?

Kamile Türbedar: In truth, we used to hear Turkish a lot. Then lots of them migrated to Turkey. It started...

Ebru Süleyman: Do you remember those migrations?

Kamile Türbedar: I remember, for sure I do. On our side my maternal aunts, both of them are in Turkey. They sent us documents so that we could migrate as well. My mother was thinking about it, but she stayed here with orphans and she was [already] collecting two pensions. What would she do there? Thus our documents expired and we did not go. My mother used to collect two pensions, one because my father died in war, his pension. She took child support for us, back then they used to give those.

Ebru Süleyman: So, your maternal aunts were gone?

Kamile Türbedar: My maternal aunts left early, I do not know them because they left my mother in Vushtrri and migrated from there.

Ebru Süleyman: They left right after the Second World War right?

⁵ The evening meal during Ramadan where one breaks the fast.

⁶ A pastry made from wheat flour which is left to rise on a piece of cloth instead of a tray or a pan.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes. Yes, them no. I do not know. First time they went, they went with the first war. With the first war they migrated there, they, the two sisters provided [documents] for their brothers. My mother stayed. Then she got married here. My mother is from Vushtrri, from the Macun family, daughter of Şevçet Aga. He was very wealthy. Gojbulja was their village. He was rich. We used to, there was a Serbian village, get them [villagers] to work, to look after children because they were from his own village; to milk the cows. My mother was daughter of a wealthy man. I do not remember my father's wealth, because we were orphans, like that...

Ebru Süleyman: Except Turkish...

Kamile Türbedar: I know Serbian, Albanian and Serbian, a little German. We used to go to school here, we learned German. There was no English back then, German, Turkish in school. That's it. Süreyya was the principal of the Turks.

Ebru Süleyman: Süreyya Yusuf.

Kamile Türbedar: Then Ali of Elma Aksoy, he was there previously, then Süreyya. They migrated to Turkey, Elma Aksoy the newscaster. They left to Turkey then Süreyya became the principal. That's how I graduated from the eight year school. I learnt this craft, I am happy about it. Back then there were almost no hairdressers, [we were] left by ourselves. Our mentor went to Turkey, we were left without a mentor. Then a woman from Belgrade, she taught us, Leyla and I. Thus we became [hairdressers]...

Ebru Süleyman: How did that woman come from Belgrade?

Kamile Türbedar: They went and took her from Belgrade. She was working there, they asked her to come and then she came. She left two of her children there.

Ebru Süleyman: Did the government bring her?

Kamile Türbedar: No, us... yes, the government. We were left without a mentor. He went to Turkey and we stayed, then she taught us well.

Then, I am telling you, we had a government, they would send each of us to trainings for one month in Belgrade. One year they sent us to Subotica, then to Belgrade to learn the craft. How to prepare those chemicals and stuff. Last time I went for twenty days. My son was going to the army; I had to leave two days early. They sent me my diploma. I left early because my son was going to the army. The day that they were supposed to give Tito the baton,⁷ that they could not, could not deliver him the baton. I arrived, a woman said, "You see what these Albanians are doing?" I said, "What do I know?"

⁷ Relay of Youth was a symbolic relay race held every year in former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1945 to 1988. The relay baton was given to the lifelong Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito on his birthday, May 25th, from the all young people of Yugoslavia.

Ebru Süleyman: Why did they not deliver? What is the baton?

Kamile Türbedar: I do not know, Serbians, Albanians they did not allow the baton to be given. I do not know, I just came from Belgrade. Then I said, “I do not know, I am leaving for Belgrade.” She knew that I was Turkish; she thought I was going to say something about Albanians. What am I going to say? I said, “*Ne znam šta se radi ovde*” [I do not know what is happening here]. There you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Back in those days, probably the whole city came to you in order to get their hair done?

Kamile Türbedar: Back then yes, there were no [other hairdressers]. First, I did Pepica’s, Kardelj’s wife’s hair and nails. Then, Jovanka [Broz] came twice. Once to Brezovica and the other time here.

Ebru Süleyman: Do you remember in which year?

Kamile Türbedar: Truth be told, I cannot remember now, I was working for the Barber Association, I was young, I did Jovanka’s hair and she said, “You did it better than my hairdresser.” I was capable of doing buns. Back then it was the fashion. The hairstyles had names, different names. *Lokna*, *pletunica*, *šestica* [Curls, braids, in the shape of six]; also more straight hairstyles *pas*, *mačkica* [the dog, the kitten]. Then, there were these different hairstyles *slobodno frizura* [free hairstyle], now they have no names, nothing. They used to send us to Belgrade to learn, now nothing. Whatever you learn from the mentor, if you got it wrong it stays wrong, depends on how you learn. Even in school, if the teacher is good, you will be taught good. There you go. She was from Belgrade, just like that. Then a private hairdressing salon opened. Hairdresser Ilyas, thus Pristina grew, filled up with hairdressers.

Ebru Süleyman: Jovanka came to Brezovica the second time.

Kamile Türbedar: Second time to Brezovica, then they went to Gjilan, they took me there, I slept there. Then in the morning I returned with them, they left for Gjilan. To the carpets and carpet factory. They left. Curtains, carpets [factory]. They left and brought me back here, just like that.

Ebru Süleyman: And then, except from Jovanka, you did many other people’s hair right?

Kamile Türbedar: Pepica Kardelj before Jovanka, then Jovanka. Wives of Mahmut Bakalli, Xhavit Nimani, Ilaz Kurteshi. Fadil Hoxha’s, her hair was natural, I would just cut it, she would come to my home in the yard and I would just cut it. She was calm. They used to come from Belgrade for me to fix their hair.

Ebru Süleyman: Who had the best hair?

Kamile Türbedar: Vahide’s hair was good, natural hair. Then the wife of Ilaz Kurteshi. I did [hair styles] for lot of them. Became the president after Tito... I used to do his hair. Just the other day his daughter came, I fixed her hair. His daughter. She said, “Hey, you know they speak Serbian with me!”

Her mother used to speak [Serbian]. She used to say, “We are Albanian, we can only speak [Serbian].” That side, their village speaks Albanian. Because Ilaz Kurteshi used to speak Turkish... no Albanian with me. Like this... I fixed Emel Sayın’s hair. Let me tell you, Mahmut’s, IlazKurteshi’s, Xhavit Nimani’s, Aslan Fazli’s [wife’s hair], like that, people in the Committee.

Ebru Süleyman: Why did Emel Sayın come here, maybe for a concert?

Kamile Türbedar: She came and sang, in Grand, I did her hair. Also, she came to the TV, I recorded her. Then there were four more, but I do not remember who they were... I did [the hair] of Erol Büyükburç’s wife. Erol Büyükburç came with his second wife, with Emel, I fixed her hair, there you go. Also, I did some makeup like a makeup artist. When the TV started, they invited me to work there, so I went. I retired from there, because I worked both here in the shop and there. Then when I left, I came here to work now but I worked at the TV until I left [retired]. I left when I was sixty, when the Serbs took over the TV. Then I left.

Ebru Süleyman: When was this, in the ‘90s?

Kamile Türbedar: I do not know, something like that. When they left the TV station. I retired, you retired at sixty but I still could work, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: When you were in TV, you would do the [hair] of newscasters.

Kamile Türbedar: Newscasters, singers who came from Belgrade, Turkey. Like I told you, I did Emel Sayın’s hair, Erol Büyükburç’s wife’s hair, second wife. She is also called Emel. She had natural hair, I just did a little makeup and put some sparkles on her hair, that is it.

Ebru Süleyman: So sister Kamile, you have seen these years, how have things changed here and how has fashion changed, music changed, the city changed, everything changed? Do you remember how these changes came about? Do you remember when the first cinema opened, when the new TV came, when the new stuff came, these kind of things, the innovations?

Kamile Türbedar: The TV [station] opened in the ‘60s, in 1960. Then they called me to the TV, I left the worker [by herself], I was working there, in the shop. Many times I had to leave the costumer and go, until 2 PM. I used to go to TV after 2 PM. Singers, whoever came there, I did vocalists’ hair and newscasters’ hair. I used to put powder so that their faces would not glow.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you remember when did the first cinema open, which movies arrived?

Kamile Türbedar: Mostly cowboy movies came here, my brother was movie-operator and he used to play movies here in *Omladina* [cinema]. There. I do not know which year, I forgot, I was still a young girl then. We used to go to the cinema. Then sometimes I used to go where my brother used to play the movies from the device, we went there with the [brother’s] bride. There you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Did you also used to go to Germia?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, we used to go to Germia, to picnic of course. We used to go on Sundays, back then there was no hotel there, we went there. There was a hotel up there, for when they used to invite managers for lunch; they used to come from abroad, from within [the country]. But, it was not here [at the time], it was built later. Then we used to go to Germia to picnic. We used take the metal sheets, where we cooked our pies. Do you understand?

Ebru Süleyman: Yes, yes, *flia*⁸...

Kamile Türbedar: We used to cook *flia* there. Not pies but *flia*. We used to light the fire, *flia*. With tambourine, we played tambourine. We sang. There was a Magbule Hovarda, outgoing, she on one side, we on the other, singing, oh lord oh lord. Like this... Also there was a Nazmiye Goleška, she would play the tambourine. We would take our *jambolija* [shag carpets] and go there with metal plates we would cook *flia*, eat there and come back home at night.

Ebru Süleyman: With whom were you staying there with?

Kamile Türbedar: All of the women, no youngsters. Elderly women, we took our kids with us. Just like that. There was a different atmosphere. Now no one knows anyone. Now they do not even accept that many guests. We used to do morning entertainment back then. In the morning, then we used to put henna for Hederlez. Then we used each to put on some stuff.

Ebru Süleyman: What is that?

Kamile Türbedar: *Martifal*.⁹ Someone used to sing a *māni* [folk poems], we used to cover her face with a red scarf. She used to put her hand in the pot. They used to leave the pot under the roses the whole night. Everyone used to put something in it, whatever they wished. Than that girl, we used to put a red scarf on her, used to take [the items] out of the pot and hold them. Someone would sing a *māni*. Then she asked, “Whose was it?” One would say, “It is mine.” Meaning they would sing *māni*.

Ebru Süleyman: This for Hederlez [St. George]?

Kamile Türbedar: For Hederlez. We used to put the earthenware pot all night under roses. Everyone from the neighborhood used to put some stuff, next day, *martifal*. We used to cook *lokum*,¹⁰ for them to eat. Those big gardens, it was a different atmosphere. Neighbors. Every neighborhood did *martifal*.

⁸ A traditional dish in Albanian cuisine consisting of crepe-like layers cooked with cinders under a lid.

⁹ *Martifal* is a folk custom practiced among nomadic Turks throughout Anatolia and among the Turks of Macedonia and Kosovo. On the afternoon of May 5, young girls in the community carry an earthenware pot from door to door and ask the women to place one of their objects (ring, earring, etc.) in it while taking a wish. Later, the pot is filled up with water and in some areas with flowers or herbs as well. Finally, the pot is placed under a rose bush covered with a piece of cloth. On the Hedrelez morning, the women gather around and bring in the pot. Then, a young girl begins to pull the items out of the pot while the women present sing *māni* poems.

¹⁰ *Lokum* is a type of breakfast pastry.

Ebru Süleyman: I have also heard that for Hederlez that they used to light a fire.

Kamile Türbedar: They used to light it in Germia. We used to light a fire and cook *flia* there, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: How about the New Years?

Kamile Türbedar: We did not celebrate the New Years that much, it was not [important].

Ebru Süleyman: Maybe Bayrams.

Kamile Türbedar: We did celebrate Bayrams. Bayrams, my mother would clean all night, sweep; dresses were sewed, thus there was a different atmosphere. Then in Ramadan, we stay out until midnight and when they hit the drums at *sahut* we all run [back home]... *A e kom kto?* [Do I have this?] {holding her microphone}... When they play the drums for sahur, every one of us used to go back home to eat sahur and sleep. Then we used to sleep longer in the morning. There was a different atmosphere.

Ebru Süleyman: What did people do back then, maybe crafts mostly?

Kamile Türbedar: More craftsmans. There were none, schools were scarce, everyone did not get education. Either they used to graduate eight year school like myself, I did eight year school and then I was sent to craftwork. My brother became cinema-operator, the other one driver. However, they [the state] wanted to educate us, but we all chose craftwork. One of them makes vacuum cleaners, as I said one is a driver; I do not know it was like that.

Ebru Süleyman: But back then when the factories used to work.

Kamile Türbedar: There was a spinning mill and a dairy factory, there was nothing else. Also vocational school, where they used to teach how to sew dresses, coats, things, tailorship. There was nothing else. There was a spinning mill, it shut down, dairy factory shut down, now we do not have any factories.

Ebru Süleyman: When you went to eight year school, did Turkish [school] exist back then?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes.

Ebru Süleyman: So it is after '57.

Kamile Türbedar: The father of Elma Aksoy, then Süreyya. Elma Aksoy left.

Ebru Süleyman: When did [schools in] Turkish first start?

Kamile Türbedar: They came and picked us up from here, you speak Turkish lets go to Turkish school, just like that.

Ebru Süleyman: Here in Elena Gjika?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, at Elena Gjika, then Meto Bajraktar after. Like this... Then my brother also studied in Turkish, also myself.

Ebru Süleyman: Who were your teachers? Can you remember?

Kamile Türbedar: Elma Aksoy's father, he was on of them. Then Süreyya, Fitnet's husband, father of Taner.

Ebru Süleyman: Süreyya Yusuf.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, after [him] there was the wife of Ali Ümer, she used to teach household class, where you learn sewing, do you understand? Knitting something, some lace-work, it did exist.

Ebru Süleyman: You had these kind of classes?

Kamile Türbedar: These classes, then I graduated, went into crafts, took my craft, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Thereafter, when you were working here, when everybody came from the city, when people used to fix their hair; they did chat and tell you lots of things. Maybe you knew what was happening more than anyone?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, true. They used to say you will know about everything in bathhouses and in hairdressers. Then the women used to come, she tells something, the other one something else; there were no televisions back then.

Ebru Süleyman: When did the TVs arrive?

Kamile Türbedar: Truth be told, I bought one and I could say the whole neighborhood used to come watch TV.

Ebru Süleyman: At your place?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, because my brother was a TV repairman then later my son also. Then the whole neighborhood used to watch. My house was like a cinema. Can you believe, women used to sit up there and all the kids used to put their legs under the TV while watching. There were no others in the neighborhood. We had it first, then the other ones, then Vehap Shita. The neighborhood was filled afterwards, but we had the first TV.

Ebru Süleyman: Back then the programs were only in specific times right? At night.

Kamile Türbedar: At night, afternoon, morning was for movies. Afternoon was for news and other stuff, there you go. Movies in the morning.

Ebru Süleyman: Did they teach you Serbian, Albanian at school or did you learn those from your circles?

Kamile Türbedar: Serbian, Serbian, no... Serbian. No, we had Serbian class, not Albanian. Serbian, we had Serbian. Three hours a week. We had Serbian two hours a week. Here we had Katica Popović, she was the teacher, Serbian. Süreyya was the principal of the Meto Bajraktari.

Ebru Süleyman: You were saying that when there were no TVs back then, [how did you get] all the information...

Kamile Türbedar: We used to open the radio, radio. Qamili i Vogël used to sing. We got a small TV, the whole neighborhood used to come and listen. Qamili i Vogël was singing: “Çu more Rexho dil te lana/ darsëm të madhe po të ban nana” that song. Women crying, I am watching all this. I was a child I was looking why they were crying. He got kicked the night they were going to get married do you understand. The horse kicked and the groom died. “Çu more Rexho dil te lana/ darsëm të madhe po të ban nana” can you understand. He died, yes, it is telling that story. Those women listening and crying; our little radio. My brother used to fix and make radios, he brought one and we were listening. Women are singing, neighbors are listening. Only we had a radio. There you go, there was poverty, my daughter, what more can I say...

Ebru Süleyman: How was it, there was poverty...

Kamile Türbedar: There was nothing, we used to buy bread with coupons. It was a different system, I am telling you after the war. They used to give child support for kids, whoever had children it was like that.

Ebru Süleyman: When did it start to get better?

Kamile Türbedar: Afterwards those coupons disappeared, there was wealth, it got better in Tito's time, we improved.

Ebru Süleyman: The city changed as well.

Kamile Türbedar: Of course, it changed, just like that.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you remember the mosque that was next to Union and the church?

Kamile Türbedar: Of course. They demolished the church. I can remember a water fountain, the one that appeared in front of the theater. Yes, Hashim, they used to call it Hashim Haxhibajram's. It belonged to Hashim Haxhibajram. They made him close it down or took his yard. It reappeared in front of the theater.

Ebru Süleyman: Sister Kamile, you said that you know all the town's locals by their surnames?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes.

Ebru Süleyman: Back then everyone knew everyone, all the families, all of them knew [each other]?

Kamile Türbedar: There were Şamli's, us Türbedar's, Hacıaguş's, Sümçür's, Maçka's, Straya's; doctor İzzedin those are Straya. There were many, I would know from the surname, like Maçka's and the others. Çeçi, I do not know you could tell by the surname.

Ebru Süleyman: By the surname and where they used to live in the city.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, yes, like that. Those who came from the villages, they used to live on the outskirts. Because the city center was... there were not a lot... Pristina was not big back then.

Ebru Süleyman: How many? Who was there?

Kamile Türbedar: Then when Tauk Bahce developed, those houses, there were none on that side. There were houses after the church. Those did not exist. Only until the church [there were houses] after that the Serbians used to live there. Then the city grew, got bigger.

Ebru Süleyman: Also the Dragodan, was just gardens right?

Kamile Türbedar: In Dragodan, there was nothing in Dragodan. There was nothing. There was nothing, just until the train rails. Then until the [train] station there were Gypsies, there were no houses there, those came after.

Ebru Süleyman: Did Roma live there?

Kamile Türbedar: Starting from the river all the way there were Romas and then once you pass over [the rails] towards the hill, those are all new.

Ebru Süleyman: Those towards the cemetery?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, those are all new houses. Those are all new houses. From train to up there, those are all new. Like that... Pristina is connected with Obiliç now.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you remember if there were any Jewish families left after the Second World War?

Kamile Türbedar: There was a Jew, Misin... Misin was his name... Misin was a director or something here, he was an important person. He was Jewish, and his wife was Serbian. She used to get her hair done at my place. Then there was Sarina, she was with a Turk, Sarina. That Jewish woman stayed, I do not know other ones and everyone had left. She got married with our director from the barber association Kadri. Then there was her, she had a son Necat, she was [here]... there were no others, and Misin, no others, no one.... Not in Pristina, I do not know for other places. There was Misin, he had a Serbian wife. Then he became the city mayor I think so, or was the committee president. Misin was a handsome man, his wife used to teach Serbian in the gymnasium, Ljubica. She was beautiful. It was like this, I do not know others. Also she... barber associations director Kadri's wife, she was Jewish. I do not know other ones. Everyone escaped, there were those stores and they sold these trinkets and beads. We used to collect them. They destroyed those places, us kids we used to collect trinkets.

Ebru Süleyman: Which houses?

Kamile Türbedar: They destroyed those stores; we did find lots of trinkets.

Ebru Süleyman: In Divan Street?

Kamile Türbedar: In Divan Street.

Ebru Süleyman: What trinkets?

Kamile Türbedar: Normal trinkets, bead.

Ebru Süleyman: Those from when they destroyed the Jewish stores.

Kamile Türbedar: They destroyed, and us kids we did collect those. However, I was the first hairdresser in Pristina, maybe Kosovo. We brought a hairdresser from Belgrade, she taught us, then she left. After that Leyla and I, we were first hairdressers here. Our mentor went to Turkey, we were the first hairdressers. Then with time, after us, there were students who taught other people, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: It started from you?

Kamile Türbedar: So it did spread, just like that.

Ebru Süleyman: So back in those days, in Yugoslav time, how was life? Were there... how was life for those who worked for the party and for those who did not?

Kamile Türbedar: For those who worked for the party, those had bigger salaries, and they had priority you know, *përparsi* [priority] as they say in Albanian. They had it. They worked in better positions. However those with craftwork, they always did crafts. We also were working, for example I was working in state shop. Leyla and I.

Ebru Süleyman: So, you mean the hairsalon you worked in was owned by the state?

Kamile Türbedar: There were no privates anywhere. Our shop was state owned, private ones opened later. Private shops. Then the TV opened, they called me, I went and worked there. I also had the shop, I worked in TV from 2 PM, with the newscasters. I used to fix them, there you go. Then they accepted my daughter there. Now my daughter graduated from Economy, she works with computers, and she won the thing in the municipality, *ambleist*¹¹ they call it.

Ebru Süleyman: Assembly member.

Kamile Türbedar: She became an assembly member. She goes to the meetings there, sometimes she comes here to help.

Ebru Süleyman: Do you remember when you got married?

Kamile Türbedar: Me? What can I tell you, I married when I was 17 years old. He was my manager, I married him. But we did not date, he went and asked for hand from my brother, he liked me, he was my manager. But we did not date.

Ebru Süleyman: Was it like that back then?

Kamile Türbedar: He shied away from my brother, I think. No, girls used to date, he was a friend of my brother and also my manager, then he asked my brother. Then he said yes; my mother did not want to give me away because I was only 17. She made me wait until I turned 18; he took me after six months.

Anyway, then I was working. He was working as a barber, me as a hairdresser. Then he became my manager, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Then your first... first child.

Kamile Türbedar: Erol, then Celal then my daughter Suzan. I had three children. My husband worked as a barber, he was my manager and he asked for me, my brother gave me away. He was not bad, he was good, my husband, thank God, there you go. Here you are (laughs).

Ebru Süleyman: So sister Kamile, can you remember when it started.... You just told me, when women told you what happened around, all the news used to flow through you? Back then when it started to get complicated, like in, when the students used to go out to protest, how was it, was there any tension?

¹¹The speaker uses the term *ambleist* to describe the municipality assembly member.

Kamile Türbedar: I was in the training in Belgrade that day, the day that they tried to give the baton to Tito for the last time. For twenty days. I had to leave two days early because my son was going to join the army. I said I have to go, my son is [going], I left. Then they came, I told my manager, he told it to the hairdresser, hairdressers' association in Belgrade. Then they came at night, I went to sleep early because I was going to come here [Pristina]; my son was going to the army. I also had my house demolished, then I fixed it, I was staying at my brother's place when it happened... I came from Belgrade and a woman said to me, "*Vidiš, nisu mogli da daju štafetu*" [Look, they couldn't deliver the baton], to Tito. They barely delivered it.

Ebru Süleyman: Some turmoil.

Kamile Türbedar: I told her, "*Ja ne znam*" [I do not know] I said, "*Ja idem za Beograd*" [I'm headed to Belgrade], that is what I said. I did not give her any material; I did not know what was going on. Anyway, when I came back, they told me.

Ebru Süleyman: What happened?

Kamile Türbedar: They barely delivered the baton.

Ebru Süleyman: Then it started to be even more....

Kamile Türbedar: Then it got messy but it was alright.

Ebru Süleyman: What were the Turks doing when these turmoils were happening?

Kamile Türbedar: No, it was good. Then they opened the TV, there was Turkish, Albanian and Serbian. The three [language] news were broadcasted in Turkish. They gave all the rights to Turks and to Albanians, so it was good. I worked for the TV then.

Ebru Süleyman: Yes.

Kamile Türbedar: The singers were coming from the abroad and then Erol Büyükburç came from Turkey with his wife, Emel. His wife's name was also Emel. He left his first wife, the second one. Her hair was natural, I just fixed her face and put a little sparkles. However, those four women who sang in the choir I do not know their names. But I know Emel Sayın, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: You said, except from Germia, you were going to the cinemas, to Tauk Bahçe for entertainment.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, we always went to Tauk Bahçe. We used to light fires in Germia and cook *flia*, like that.

Ebru Süleyman: Then in neighborhood, you were visiting one another, did you do other things? Did you go to the sea [vacation]?

Kamile Türbedar: Truth be told, I went because my father died in war, they sent us to the sea every year.

Ebru Süleyman: Did everyone go?

Kamile Türbedar: No, but they sent us to summer vacation. My mother came to see, they sent us to Luzhan first and then to Deçan, then they started to send us to seaside. My mother did not know how to travel back then; I used to miss my mother. You could not [travel] to Čakor, first, very steep mountain then downhill. Now you can go to Ulcinj in a minute [now]. Back then it was difficult.

Ebru Süleyman: With what did you use to go, with cars?

Kamile Türbedar: By bus. My paternal aunt would come; I told her, “Come on aunty let me take you to the sea.” She said, “So my life is going to end here.” That Čakor, that big mountain. By the time you come down, you saw this cliff and you would lose it. Very difficult. There was no way; it was snake-like {does a curving hand gesture}. Climb up first then climb down. God forbid, how did we [go], youth! My aunt went crazy, “No, I will not come any more.” Then the road was constructed; now you arrive in Ulcinj in a minute. How many hours does it take? It’s close. However, back then it was very difficult to go there.

Ebru Süleyman: Did people go to different places within Yugoslavia? You could travel pretty easy.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, yes, for sure. To Zagreb, Belgrade, for sure.

Ebru Süleyman: How about outside Yugoslavia?

Kamile Türbedar: Look, I got the first place when Koleston first appeared.

Ebru Süleyman: Yes.

Kamile Türbedar: I advertised Koleston, got the first place in Kosovo. With hairstyle and color. Koleston, then they invited me as a guest there, to Ljubljana. Then I went there, they greeted me as if I was a queen. They showed me around the factory, they picked me up from the hotel and they showed me around. They did not know what else to do, they showed so much respect.

Ebru Süleyman: How was Ljubljana, so different from here?

Kamile Türbedar: Yes, it was Slovenians, Slovenia. When it first started, for the first time. Koleston did not exist previously. They used to color with henna and with a rock colors back then. They used to beat the rock and use that thing. There was nothing, the colors appeared after. Koleston was first,

then Imedija and whatnot. But I want to say, I got the first place with Koleston. There was a woman Nina Kačunković, she was beautiful. I asked her, “*Hoćeš da mi budeš manekenka?*” [Would you like to be my model?] She said, “*Kako da ne*” [Why not]. Now I was scared, us as old timers, I ask again, “*Nina nemoj da me ostaviš*” [Nina, do not leave me] do not leave me in the last moment. I was working on her hair with Koleston when she said, “*Ako me pitaš još jedan put neću da izađem*” [If you ask me one more time I will not show-up]. Because there was fanaticism you know. You cannot find [someone] to do the fashion show, right? It was like that back then.

Then we went to Božur and I took first place with Koleston. Then they gave me a big package like this {gestures the largeness with her hands}, it was big like this. I did not know what was in it, I gave it to my model. Truth be told, I never asked. She was pretty, I gave it to her. I colored her hair with Koleston, worked on her hairstyle for a day or two, got the first place in Kosovo. Then they invited me to Ljubljana, I was a guest for a week. They showed me around the factory, looked after me as if I was a queen. Four-five of them came in the morning to show me around. I said to myself, who am I for all this? Regardless, whoever I was, I was that. It went by, that way. Then we used to work with Koleston, like that...

Ebru Süleyman: Were there some people who did go to other places from Yugoslavia, was it fairly easy to travel?

Kamile Türbedar: Let me tell you, in Tito’s time we did travel easily. {controls the microphone with her hand} *More po harroj* [I forget]. We traveled easily. I am talking about Tito times. However, how they used to live, I do not know, I was little. But in Tito’s time everyone had it. Everyone could get education, either faculty, he schooled everyone for free. There you go. Healthcare, there was everything, I am talking about Tito times.

Ebru Süleyman: Did tourists come here, from different places, to Yugoslavia?

Kamile Türbedar: Of course, they would come to Kosovo. They used to come, they used to bring [people] from Belgrade, they did exchanges.

I used to do the hair of the wife of Ilaz Kurteshi, she was my customer. All the wives of these executives such as Fadil Hoxha, Xhavit Niman, Ilaz Kurteshi, Aslan Fazli got their hair done at my shop. Also, Drita Dobrosi, she was head of the committee back then. Then there were these Serbians, Ana Šimić and whatnot, those all were my customers, like that. I did the hair of all these executives.

Ebru Süleyman: Back then women and men were more equal or did inequality always exist?

Kamile Türbedar: Equal. As soon as Tito took over, equal. There was equality. In every aspect it was brotherhood and unity, there you go. There was... the system was different.

For New Years we used to go, we used to wait [celebrate] it in Božur and Grand later.

Let me tell you I did Emel Sayin's hair in Grand, she came to sing. They invited her for New Years. The lights went off, Emel Sayin went [to the stage] and the lights were off, she escaped immediately and she thought they were doing something. Then the lights were on not even a minute later but she was afraid. I do not know, as soon as she started singing the lights went off, I do not know what was happening.

Ebru Süleyman: Some problem?

Kamile Türbedar: Problem somewhere else, it was not like someone turned them off knowingly. Then she escaped. Then the lights came on, she came and sang, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Then Yugoslavia ended... '90s...

Kamile Türbedar: Then came the Albania, Albania; Vaçe Zela, Gaço Çako I do not know, all the Albanian singers. Then we toured the whole Kosovo and in the end we went to Montenegro, I saw them off to Montenegro, they did a concert there, sang songs and left. There you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Then can you remember when you said, I guess when you retired from the TV, when it was getting closer to war, then the war happened and everything changed?

Kamile Türbedar: No, everything changed, no. There was no war when I was working for the TV, we were comfortable.

Ebru Süleyman: Yes, yes, you retired and then war happened.

Kamile Türbedar: Then I completed [my work]. I retired. When this changed, I do not know, we escaped to Turkey. I went to my brother.

Ebru Süleyman: As a refugee.

Kamile Türbedar: We stayed. We stayed around six months and then we came back. My husband stayed here, he was afraid, if I am being honest.

Ebru Süleyman: Like everyone.

Kamile Türbedar: Like everyone but they did not harm my husband because they went in one day wanting to raid my house, when a police said, "Odakle ti ova tašna?" [Where did you get this bag from?] He saw there. Shefqet Pllana was with that man, husband of Ajten Pllana, they were in Ljubljana. They had a meeting there, they got some bags and he gave that to my husband. He said, "Odakle ti ova tašna?" [Where did you get this bag from?] "Shefqet Pllana mi je dao". [Shefqet Pllana gave it to me]. "Koja kuča Shefqet?" [Which one is Shefqet's house]. He said, "There, where you wanted to break the door." Then that policeman did not let them to break in.

Because we all escaped to Turkey. They went to Shefqet's and broke his door and then my husband said, "I fixed his door with some wood." There you go. He did not let them ransack his house. My house also was not ransacked because they were ransacking.

Ebru Süleyman: Back then many people...

Kamile Türbedar: My husband Sami did not let Shefqet Pllana's house.... He said, "This is Shefqet Pllana's, yes we were together." They saw the bag, do you understand? Then he goes, "Where did you get this bag from?" "You broke Shefqet Pllana's house, yes?" Then he did not let the others to break in his house. There you go. "We were... he was a very good man, we were in Ljubljana" like that.

Ebru Süleyman: Then you came back.

Kamile Türbedar: We came back, we came back after war.

Ebru Süleyman: Then everything changed.

Kamile Türbedar: Yes. I was so afraid that I gave birth to my daughter in Turkey. I was afraid, scared, "fear waits the mountains."¹² Suzan was born in Turkey, like that. I had a cousin there, he was a hairdresser and his wife was also a hairdresser. His son is a doctor, Doctor Levent in Turkey. His daughter stayed there also, they [parents] died, there you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Now when you look, when you look back was life too different?

Kamile Türbedar: Life is good but the past... it is so different. However, I cannot complain because my father died in war, they looked after us and I cannot say anything. I cannot say... they looked after us. Phaeton, [back then] there were no cars; they used to bring milk, powder, egg powder they used to call it, margarine they used to bring with phaetons. There was nothing to buy in the shops. Fabric for sewing undershirts, underwear, underpants. They used to bring cloth for my brother to stitch, he was a tailor. It was like this, there was nothing to buy in the shops, nothing.

Ebru Süleyman: Poverty after war.

Kamile Türbedar: Listen to this, socks... when the nylon socks would rip off, we would send it to this woman in order for her to raise the strings. It was hard, to buy nylon socks. Poverty was that way, what can I say to you. Now there is everything, flowing with milk and honey. What else do you want me to tell you?

Ebru Süleyman: I do not know, I do not know what else to ask; only if you have something to say, something that comes to mind, whatever you want. If not...

¹² An idiom meaning fear can get the best of people.

Kamile Türbedar: Let me tell you, I got the first place with Koleston here, they send me there. Treated with respect. Jovanka came twice, I combed and made her hair, there you go. What else can I tell?

Ebru Süleyman: Let me ask one more thing, which songs did you listen to, which songs, who sang those the most?

Kamile Türbedar: Qamili i Vogël in Albanian used to sing “Çu more Rexho” [Rise Rexho].

Ebru Süleyman: You women, which songs did you sing?

Kamile Türbedar: We used to bring Blind Meliha from Vushtrri for weddings. She used to play in weddings. There you go. She used to sing Turkish music. Us here; there were two Gypsy women who played tambourines in weddings. They sang Turkish, like that. I do not know if men had music, but women did on festivities.

Ebru Süleyman: Where did men stay?

Kamile Türbedar: Men did those separately.

Ebru Süleyman: Where? Maybe in coffee shops in general?

Kamile Türbedar: No, no, no. They were in houses. Neighbors used to let their homes; it was like that back then. The neighbors used to give their homes for men, and different one for women.

Ebru Süleyman: Not just for weddings but for other times as well?

Kamile Türbedar: For funerals also. A different house for men, different one for women, just like that.

Ebru Süleyman: Alright sister Kamile, thank you for telling us everything.

Kamile Türbedar: You are welcome! What else can I say? There was a government, I am telling you they used to send us [things], in order for us to prosper. My brothers did not want, however they [the government] wanted to raise us because we were fatherless, he died at war. There was respect. We had it, the path was open for us, you know. Just because they did not want it; one of them became a driver, other one cinema-operator, he graduated from gymnasium¹³ became a cinema-operator, he was playing movies. The other one became a driver, if you look at the other one he became a boxer, there you go. Because there was privileges for [the families of] those who died at war, there was a lot of it. There you go.

Ebru Süleyman: Thank you sister Kamile...

¹³ A European type of secondary school with emphasis on academic learning, different from vocational schools because it prepares students for university.

Kamile Türbedar: You are welcome!

Ebru Süleyman: ... for your time and for your stories!

Kamile Türbedar: What can I say, thank you for coming here, I told you, there you go.